

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 109919

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI PRIORITY

INFO USLO PEKING PRIORITY

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

UNCLAS STATE 109919

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR, TW, CH

SUBJECT: PRESS COMMENT ON US CHINA POLICY

1. FOLLOWING ARTICLE BY LESLIE GELB APPEARED SATURDAY, MAY 10 IN NEW YORK TIMES. AS EXCERPTS OR COMMENTS MAY APPEAR IN LOCAL PRESS, ENTIRE TEXT IS REPEATED FOR YOUR INFORMATION.

2. BEGIN TEXT: WASHINGTON, MAY 9 - ARGUMENTS ARE BEING STRONGLY ADVANCED WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION THAT NO NEW CONCESSIONS SHOULD BE MADE TO CHINA ON THE STATUS OF TAIWAN, ACCORDING TO SOURCES FAMILIAR WITH THESE DISCUSSIONS.

2. AT THE SAME TIME, THE SOURCES SAID, CONSERVATIVES IN CONGRESS ARE ADVISING PRESIDENT FORD THAT HE SHOULD NOT VISIT CHINA NEXT FALL ON THE GROUND THAT SUCH A VISIT WOULD CREATE PRESSURES TO MAKE CONCESSIONS.

3. THE ARGUMENTS AND MANEUVERS ARE TIED TO WHAT THE ADMINISTRATION PERCEIVES AS A NEED TO REAFFIRM AMERICAN TREATY COMMITMENTS IN THE WAKE OF THE COMMUNIST TAKEOVER
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 109919

IN INDOCHINA AND THE UNEASINESS THIS HAS GENERATED AMONG ALLIES.

4. IN THE MEANTIME, SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER IS

SAID TO BE TRYING TO KEEP THE SITUATION FLUID IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT IT WOULD BE POLITICALLY UNWISE FOR THE PRESIDENT TO MAKE NEW CONCESSIONS ON TAIWAN NOW AND IN THE HOPE THAT THE CHINESE LEADERS WILL UNDERSTAND THE AMERICAN PREDICAMENT.

5. TAIWAN AN EMOTIONAL ISSUE - THE HOUSE MINORITY LEADER JOHN J. RHODES OF ARIZONA, SAID IN AN INTERVIEW THAT HE SAW NO SIGNS OF NEW AMERICAN MOVES TO LOOSEN TIES WITH TAIPEI AND THAT NONE WERE LIKELY "IF PRESIDENT FORD WANTS TO BE RENOMINATED BY THE REPUBLICAN PARTY."

6. WHILE NOT STATING HIS OWN POSITION, MR. RHODES ADDED, "THIS IS A MATTER ON WHICH CONSERVATIVES FEEL VERY STRONGLY AND ON WHICH THEY STILL HAVE INFLUENCE."

7. IN 1972, PRESIDENT NIXON AND PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI SIGNED THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE. THE UNITED STATES DECLARED IN THIS THAT IT "DOES NOT CHALLENGE" THAT "ALL CHINESE ON EITHER SIDE OF THE TAIWAN STRAIT MAINTAIN THERE IS BUT ONE CHINA AND THAT TAIWAN IS A PART OF CHINA."

7. THE AMERICAN SIDE ALSO PLEDGED ITSELF TO ULTIMATE MILITARY DISENGAGEMENT FROM TAIWAN.

8. AFTER THE SIGNING OF THE COMMUNIQUE, THE AMERICAN MILITARY PRESENCE ON TAIWAN INCREASED, AND THEN DECREASED TO THE PRESENT LEVEL OF ABOUT 5,000. OTHER DIPLOMATIC AND MILITARY STEPS WERE TAKEN TO UNDERLINE CONTINUING WASHINGTON TIES WITH TAIPEI.

9. AT THE SAME TIME, MR. KISSINGER ORDERED STUDIES OF FORMULAS THAT WOULD ALLOW THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH CHINA COMBINED WITH SOME KIND OF PLEDGE FROM PEKING NOT TO REUNITE TAIWAN WITH CHINA BY FORCE.

10. STUDIES WERE ALSO UNDERTAKEN ON WHAT STEPS THE UNITED STATES MIGHT TAKE SHORT OF A SETTLEMENT OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 109919

TAIWAN PROBLEM, SUCH AS FURTHER MILITARY WITHDRAWALS AND CHANGES IN PUBLIC RHETORIC. BUT MOST OF THESE EFFORTS, THE SOURCES RELATED, HAVE MORE OR LESS COME TO A HALT.

11. CONGRESSIONAL CONSERVATIVES HAVE BEEN ARGUING THAT THE PRESIDENT CANNOT GO TO CHINA AND SIMPLY VISIT THE GREAT WALL AND ATTEND BANQUETS, AND THAT HE WILL BE TEMPTED TO MAKE CONCESSIONS IN ORDER TO HAVE SOMETHING CONCRETE TO ANNOUNCE.

12. MR. KISSINGER IS SAID TO BELIEVE THAT NEW CHINESE-AMERICAN AGREEMENTS ARE NOT SO NECESSARY TO GOOD MUTUAL RELATIONS AS NEW ACCORDS BETWEEN MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON.

HIS STRATEGY WITH RESPECT TO MOSCOW IS TO ENTANGLE SOVIET LEADERS CONTINUALLY IN NEW NEGOTIATIONS. HIS STRATEGY WITH RESPECT TO PEKING IS TO ADJUST AMERICAN EXPECTATIONS TO A MORE LOW-KEY RELATIONSHIP WITHOUT DIPLOMATIC EXTRAVAGANZAS.

13. MOREOVER, ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS ARE KNOWN TO MAINTAIN THAT CHINA HAS NOT EXERTED "MEANINGFUL PRESSURE" ON THE UNITED STATES FOR A NEAR-TERM RESOLUTION OF THE TAIWAN PROBLEM.

14. WHEN ASKED TO EXPLAIN THE CONTENTIONS OF CERTAIN FOREIGN DIPLOMATS AND THE SENATE MAJORITY LEADER, MIKE MANSFIELD OF MONTANA, THAT PEKING IS HIGHLY DISSATISFIED WITH PROGRESS ON THE TAIWAN ISSUE, ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS ARE SAID TO RESPOND WITH SEVERAL LINES OF EXPLANATION.

15. ONE IS THAT THESE MEN WERE PREDISPOSED TO HEAR DISSATISFACTION.

16. ANOTHER IS THAT OTHER RECENT AMERICAN VISITORS TO CHINA, SUCH AS MR. RHODES AND THE HOUSE SPEAKER, CARL ALBERT, HAVE GAINED CONTRARY IMPRESSIONS. MR. RHODES CONFIRMED THIS.

17. A THIRD IS THAT CHINESE LEADERS WILL NOT RAISE THE TAIWAN ISSUE ON THEIR OWN, BUT, IF ASKED ABOUT IT, THEY WILL, OF COURSE, ARGUE THAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN TOO SLOW.
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 109919

18. ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS SAID THAT NO DEFINITE DATE HAS BEEN SET FOR THE FORD TRIP TO CHINA, BUT THAT IT IS BEING PLANNED FOR ABOUT TWO MONTHS AFTER THE EXPECTED FALL MEETING BETWEEN MR. FORD AND THE SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER; LEONID I. BREZHNEV. END TEXT INGERSOLL

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